

Grade: 6th +
Time: 1 hour
Season: Spring, summer, fall

Fly Fishing

National Science Teaching Standards

A. Science as **INQUIRY**

C. **LIFE** Science

D. **EARTH** Science

F. Science in **PERSONAL** and **SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE**

Background Information:

Fly Fishing is a relaxing sport that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and backgrounds. Fly Fishing can also be used as a “carrot” to draw young people and even adults into the natural world. Besides learning new skills, first-time anglers are introduced to the aquatic ecosystem. This brings them into contact with important conservation and environmental issues.

Objectives:

- Students will become familiar with basic equipment needed to fly fish.
- Students will learn safety issues and assembly of tackle.
- Students will learn basic casting and retrieval techniques with fly fishing tackle.
- Students will become acquainted with general fishing regulations and ethical concepts.
- Students will be introduced to the aquatic life forms commonly found in Iowa ponds, lakes & streams.
- Students will catch a fish using flies and fly fishing equipment.

Pre Activity:

- Invite a fly fishing parent or adult into your classroom to go over fly fishing gear & tackle. Have your guest demonstrate casting a fly rod.
- Research on the internet the common fish found in Iowa.
- Research the history of fly fishing and tying flies in the library or on the internet.
- Research common plants found around and in Iowa ponds.
- Make a class mural of a typical Iowa pond. Have each student draw or make objects to put in the mural. Each student shares what they put in the “pond” and facts about the objects.
- A fly tying class is an excellent companion class.

Equipment:

- Copy of Iowa Fishing Regulations
 - Handouts of Iowa farm pond fish and characteristics. Also use taxidermy mounts in the basement of the dining hall.
 - Fly fishing rods and reels. Springbrook Conservation Education Center can provide 30 outfits.
- *Groups are welcome to bring their own tackle, rods and reels.

Procedure:

1. Hand out the fishing regulations. Briefly explain.
2. Show the students the common fish found in Iowa farm ponds.
3. Briefly go over equipment
4. Explain and demonstrate basic fly rod casting techniques.
5. In an open area, demonstrate and allow students to practice fly rod casting.
6. Carry equipment to fishing area.
7. Discuss safety rules before fishing:
 - Students need to spread out so they have plenty of room for casting.
 - Always look around to be sure the area is clear before casting.
 - Catch and Release...discuss what it is and the ethics of it.
 - While walking with rod, be sure the hook is secured and the rod tip is protected.
 - If any garbage or trash is found, collect and discard in an appropriate receptacle.
8. Demonstrate and help students attach a fly to their line.
9. GO FISHING!!!
10. Help students identify the fish they catch. Help them remove fish from the hook and release them back into the water.
11. Collect all gear, secure hook to fly rod, and walk back to the classroom.
12. Wash hands with soap and water.

Post Activity:

- Have students write a letter to a parent, relative, or friend that fly fishes. The student should explain the field trip to the Springbrook Conservation Education Center and the fun they had at the fly fishing activity! Ask this person in a polite manner if they could take him/her fly fishing sometime soon or the next time they are headed out on a fly fishing adventure.
- Students can explore resources to further their development in fly fishing. Some of these may include: local, state, and national fly fishing and tying organizations or clubs, local stores that sell fly fishing equipment, mail order catalogs, books and magazines, internet web sites, and DNR staff.
- A fly tying class is an excellent companion class.

Post Discussion:

- Discuss the characteristics of fish caught in Iowa.
- Have students list food chains in Iowa ponds, lakes and streams.
- How does fishing affect the food chains, the food web, and the balance in this wetland habitat?
- What other things effect aquatic habitat?
- Why are there rules and regulations for fishing?
- Why are people required to get a fishing license?
- Discuss safety issues when near a farm pond, river, and/or lake in Iowa.
- Discuss fly fishing as a hobby, sport, and occupation.
- How has fly fishing changed through history?
- How can the internet be used to research fly fishing and related activities?

Sponsors appear on the next page.

The Springbrook CEC staff would like to recognize and thank the following sponsors of our fly tying program. Please support them whenever possible!!

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Please do not hesitate to contact Springbrook CEC staff if you have fly fishing questions.

